

UNITED STATES NAVAL ACADEMY PLEBE SPONSOR PROGRAM

Frequently Asked Questions

Q1. I MAY BE INTERESTED IN BEING A SPONSOR? WHAT IS REQUIRED AND WHAT DO I NEED TO DO?

Military (Active Duty or Retired) who are an E-6 and above or O-3 and above are eligible to apply to sponsor a plebe. Local area civilians are also welcome to apply. All applicants, military or civilian (and their spouses, if applicable), must be at least 28 years or age. All applicants **MUST** live within 22 miles of the Naval Academy in order to sponsor a midshipman.

If you meet the basic eligibility requirements, we recommend you read through the rest of the FAQs, which provide further information about the program. To become an **officially registered sponsor**, you must submit an application and attend training to be assigned a plebe. If you would like an application, send an email to sponsor@usna.edu or call 410-293-7127 and leave a message.

Q2. AS A SPONSOR, WHAT CAN I DO FOR MY PLEBE(S) AND WHAT IS EXPECTED OF ME?

Sponsors have historically provided necessary friendship, understanding and encouragement to Fourth Class midshipmen (plebes) as they meet the challenges associated with a demanding Plebe year. Sponsors provide a unique place for Fourth Class midshipmen to relax and enjoy the companionship sponsor families can offer, a “home away from home.”

It is strongly recommended that sponsors establish house rules shortly after the initial meeting with the midshipmen. The Plebe/sponsor relationship often develops better when the midshipmen immediately know what is expected. Your expectations should not include babysitting or unreasonable chores in return for your hospitality.

The time commitment and contact between your family the plebe are individual choices. Plebes are assigned sponsors in August each year with the expectation that the relationship will continue throughout the Academic Year (August – May). Please see Questions 4 and 5 for further information.

Q3. WHAT ARE MY PLEBE’S RESPONSIBILITIES?

Fourth Class midshipmen are expected to act as mature adults and future Navy and Marine Corps officers at all times. Only the highest standards of personal behavior, etiquette and accountability are acceptable. Fourth Class midshipmen are aware of the regulations to which

they are subject and should not place a sponsor in any pressured situations regarding midshipmen rules. Fourth Class midshipmen are also encouraged to keep sponsors involved in Naval Academy activities and to express their appreciation for a sponsor's generosity.

Q4. WHAT ARE THE LIBERTY REGULATIONS? WHEN CAN MY PLEBE VISIT MY HOME?

Liberty is a privilege and is granted when deemed appropriate by the Commandant of Midshipmen. **While Liberty generally tends to occur at the same times on a regularly scheduled basis, please understand that liberty schedules are subject to change with little prior notice.**

Plebes are not granted liberty until after the completion of Plebe Summer and the Reform of the Brigade, which occurs in August each year.

There are basically two types of liberty for midshipmen:

Town Liberty – **Town liberty is the only time Plebes may visit their sponsors at their homes.** On Weekends that they do not have duty, Fourth Class midshipmen are normally authorized town liberty beginning after their last military obligation on Saturday, but in no case earlier than 1015 (10:15 am). The expiration of their liberty will be 2200 (10 pm). Expiration of liberty means that they are back in their Company area in Bancroft Hall; plan accordingly for travel time.

While on Town Liberty, Plebes must remain within 22 miles of the Naval Academy unless given prior permission by their Company Officer.

On select Saturday evenings when military training will be conducted, the Plebes will be required to return to Bancroft Hall by 2000 (8 pm).

During the fall semester, all Midshipmen must attend all home football games; liberty will commence after the end of the game. The football schedule is available at <http://www.navysports.com/sports/football/schedules/> . The expiration of their liberty will be 2200 (10 pm), unless otherwise modified.

Yard Liberty – During yard liberty, a Fourth Class midshipman must remain within the Naval Academy grounds bound by the security walls and fences, Severn River and Spa Creek. Midshipmen are not authorized to visit sponsor's homes during periods of yard liberty, including those of sponsors who reside on the Naval Academy grounds. Fourth Class midshipmen are typically authorized yard liberty from 0530 until 2030 daily. They are also authorized yard liberty whenever town liberty is authorized. Sponsors may visit with their midshipmen on the Yard during periods of Yard liberty.

Q5. DOES THE PLEBE SPONSOR PROGRAM ONLY APPLY TO PLEBE YEAR OR CAN I SPONSOR MY MIDSHIPMEN UNTIL GRADUATION?

The program is designed solely for Plebes, however many families continue their relationship with their Midshipmen until graduation and beyond.

Q6. CAN I CONTACT MY PLEBE'S PARENTS?

Yes. You will meet your plebe the weekend prior to Plebe Parents' weekend in August, which is an opportunity to find out about their family and get contact information, if the plebe wants to provide it to you. While we do not require any kind of meeting between sponsors and plebe parents, many sponsors and parents find it a good time to meet. We do recommend communication between the sponsors and parents as a means to provide the necessary friendship, understanding and encouragement to the midshipman during the Plebe year.

Q7. MAY THE PLEBE STAY IN MY HOME ALONE?

Plebes should not be present in your home unless an **officially registered sponsor** is present. Plebes should not baby-sit or perform services for hire.

Q8. WHAT ARE THE RULES REGARDING TRANSPORTATION OF FOURTH CLASS MIDSHIPMEN?

Fourth Class midshipmen are not authorized to own or operate motor vehicles. They are authorized to make use of public transportation to include taxicabs. They may only ride in private automobiles when accompanied or driven by a USNA staff or faculty member, their parents, and/or guardians, or an **officially registered sponsor. (Children, extended family members, or friends of registered sponsors who are licensed drivers should not transport Midshipmen in their vehicles).** Midshipmen of all classes are authorized to operate or ride in automobiles or taxis during a leave period (e.g., Thanksgiving and End-of Semester leave).

Q9. WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I HAVE A PROBLEM WITH MY PLEBE?

Should you experience a problem with your Plebe(s), please contact his or her Company Officer. The Company Officer will be able to help you resolve any problems that might occur. If you need the Company Officer's phone number please call Bancroft Hall Main Office at 410-293-5001/2 and they will be able to provide you with the number.

Q10. WHEN DO I HAVE TO APPLY?

The majority of applications for the incoming class of plebes are mailed out each year in approximately mid-March to April and continue until late June. It is not a rolling application process. Applications are due as soon as possible, but no later than 1 July. Training occurs on several dates in June and July. Sponsor assignments are made in early August, and a reception is held for the initial "meet and greet" in early August at the Academy. If you would like an application, send an email with you name, address and telephone number to sponsor@usna.edu or call 410-293-7127 and leave a message.